

Around the World with Hotel Cats

BY PHILLIP MLYNAR

A cat can truly transform a house into a home. Thankfully, the presence of a feline on the premises can also provide a similarly soothing effect when you're seeking out temporary accommodation at a hotel. Let's give it up for these distinguished hotelier kitties who are all about enjoying a luxurious lifestyle in upscale digs.



Socrate in Paris

The palatial **Le Bristol Paris** is partial to furry friends. For the past 11 years it has been home to a male Birman named Fa-Raon, in a nod to ancient Egypt. Fa-Raon is about to retire to the Paris area home of one of Le Bristol's receptionists, leaving a new kitten to take over his hotel duties (like ordering meals from a three-starred Michelin kitchen and retreating to a private room exclusively designed by the graffiti artist Renk). That new kitten is Socrate, who is happy, a good listener and curious about the world around him.

Learn more about him at oetker-collection.com/hotels/le-bristol-paris/the-hotel/socrate.



New York's Hamlet

The fine felines who have called **The Algonquin Hotel** in New York City home since the 1920s are the world's foremost hotel cats. Hamlet (the eighth) is the



The job of resident cat of Le Bristol hotel in Paris is now in the capable paws of Socrate, who enjoys lounging around the lobby.



current incumbent kitty, having come to reside at the institution after being scooped up from a feral colony in Long Island. When not lounging in his private quarters, you might witness this domestic shorthair presiding over the Algonquin's annual kitty fashion show. Complementing the run of cats named Hamlet, the hotel has also counted some esteemed Matildas over the years.

Follow him on Instagram @the_algonquincat or visit algonquinhotel.com/the-algonquin-cat.



Lilibet in London

A relatively recent addition to the scene, Lilibet is an illustrious Siberian kitty who decided on a whim to call **The Lanesborough** in London her new home back in 2019. Taking advantage of her salubrious situation, Lilibet spent this year's



Hamlet is the eighth Hamlet (following three Matildas). All were named after famed resident John Barrymore, in honor of his greatest stage role.

Courtesy Le Bristol Paris

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Courtesy The Algonquin Hotel



Now that her kitten-rearing days are over, Mama Cat enjoys relaxing poolside at the Kembali Guest House in Bali.



At the Ionia Guest House in Turkey, Leo (left) likes to prowl the grounds, while Pringles (above) enjoys lounging on the sun porch.

International Cat Day scarfing down a particularly fancy-looking tuna tartare delight from a lavish porcelain plate.

Follow her on Instagram @the_lanesborough or visit oetkercollection.com/hotels/the-lanesborough/the-hotel/lilibet-the-cat.



London's Soho Sir Godfrey

Hazlitt's boutique hotel is situated in a row of historic 18th century Georgian houses in London's Soho district. Key to the venture's appeal is Sir Godfrey, who was originally rescued from the Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and is now considered to be the establishment's lord of the manor. When not mingling with London socialites and overseas royalty, Sir Godfrey can be found pursuing his long-standing hobbies of searching out snacks and relaxing by the fireplace.

Follow him on Instagram @hazlittshotel or visit hazlittshotel.com.



Mama Cat in Bali

Based in the beachside community of Sanur in Bali, Mama Cat decided to take up residence at the **Kembali Lagi Guest House & Villas** in 2017 after wandering in from the

street. It turned out that Mama Cat was actually pregnant — and the hotel staff stepped up to help the kitty successfully deliver her litter from the safety of an empty guest room. These days, Mama Cat spends her time idling away the afternoons on her poolside perch.

Follow her on Instagram @kembali_lagiguesthouse or visit kembalialagi.com.



South Africa's Skabenga

Skabenga is a somewhat portly tabby who claims the mantle of longest-standing guest at the **The Oyster Box** hotel in Durban, South Africa. A former stray whose name translates as "vagabond," you'll find Skabenga holding court on the hotel's plush lobby couch, ordering prawn cocktail for breakfast and engaging in naps on the high-end soft-top sports cars of guests.

See her adventures at oysterboxhotel.com/discover/red-carnation-family/a-day-in-the-life-of-skabenga-the-oyster-box-cat.



Kléopatre in Germany

Kléopatre embraces the responsibilities of being the official queen of the house at **Brenners Park**

Hotel & Spa in Baden-Baden, Germany.

This plush white feline is actually related to Fa-Raon and used to reside at Le Bristol, before trading the bustle of city life for the pastoral charms of the country. Naturally, a spot by the fireplace is always reserved for Kléopatre.

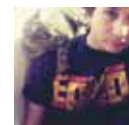
Follow her on Instagram @brennersparkhotel.



The Ionia Guest House Clowder in Turkey

Finally, if you're looking to max out the kitty quotient of your stay, consider the **Ionia Guest House** in Turkey's Aegean area. Pitched as a rural bed and breakfast set up, the property houses several resident felines. Key among the ranks are Leo, who enjoys prowling the grounds, and Pringles, who you'll often see lounging on the sun porch.

Follow them on Instagram @ionia_guesthouse_strawbalehotel. 📷



Phillip Mlynar spends his days writing about cats, hip-hop and food, often while being pestered by his rescue, a mackerel tabby named Mimosa. His work appears in *Vice*, *Pitchfork*, *Red Bull*, *Bandcamp*, *VinePair* and *Catster*. He's won various awards at the Cat Writers' Association Communication Contests.



Celebrating Firehouse Cats

BY PHILLIP MLYNAR



Flame

The most well-known firehouse cat, Flame was originally discovered when workers at the Belmont Fire Department in Greenville, South Carolina, heard a stream of continuous meows coming from behind the station. After a quick investigation, they discovered “a small, malnourished cat hunkered down in the grass,” as fire engineer Jordan Lide told the *Cat Daddies* documentary last year.

Duly rescued, Flame, known as “The Arson Cat,” quickly took to life as the station’s resident feline — and staff even noticed how the confident ginger kitty actually seemed to lower the collective stress levels of the crew. Although, let’s diplomatically gloss over a subsequent incident where the inquisitive Flame managed to get himself stuck inside a 12-inch storm drain running below the firehouse’s parking lot.

Follow Flame on Instagram
[@flamethearsoncat](#)

Heartwarming cat rescue stories often involve a feline being scooped up from some nefarious or dangerous situation and going on to live a calm and contented life in a domestic forever home. But in some cases, these kitties in need end up taking on a far more active and involved role at their new digs — like becoming a local fire station’s resident cat.

Along with increasing the morale of the squad, the role of a firehouse cat is an esteemed position that involves letting pesky vermin know to stay well away from fire department headquarters. As a salute to those cats who have chosen to take on a life dedicated to public service, let’s meet a revered quartet of intrepid firehouse felines.



Burkey



Located in the Wissinoming neighborhood of Northeast Philadelphia, Engine 52 houses a cocksure gray-and-white firehouse cat named Burkey. Along with making daily spot checks on the fire crew's engine, Burkey has been entrusted with official vermin control responsibilities in a bid to keep the firehouse sanitary. As a recent caption to an Instagram post proudly claimed: "City pest contractors can't compete with her mice kill record."

Follow Burkey on Instagram: @philly_engine52



Carlow

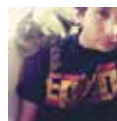


Residing at the New York City Fire Department

Ladder 13 station house in the Yorkville neighborhood of Manhattan, Carlow is a cat who is not short on confidence. This white-and-ginger chap bills himself on social media as the "O.G. of firehouse cats" and claims, "I don't do baths but I do love treats."

According to lore, Carlow's origin story involves being discovered hiding away inside a tire in a mechanic's shop while he was still a wandering kitten, before taking up a position at the firehouse. These days, Carlow's formal firehouse duties involve nothing less than embracing the grand responsibility to "oversee everyone and everything." As for Carlow's moniker? He's named after the firehouse's favorite local pub.

Follow Carlow on Instagram
@carlow_fdney_cat 🐾



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Scout



Scout is a plucky tortoiseshell who has become a beloved fixture of the Ladder 7 firehouse in New York City. Originally announcing herself on social media back in 2019 by posing for a selfie in a knitted red firefighter's hat, Scout has since gone on to take responsibility for the firehouse's Engine 16. Naturally, on Scout's watch, proper fire truck maintenance seems to very much involve napping on the vehicle.

Unfortunately, Scout caused a scare in March of 2021, when she appeared to go missing from the firehouse. Thankfully she was successfully found



and has been able to return to her duties as a proud firecat.

Follow Scout on Instagram @new_york_city_fire_kitty

We Love Cat People — Even When They're Cartoon Characters

BY PHILLIP MLYNAR



©FOX Image Collection | Getty Images

We all get a thrill when a beloved TV show character is revealed to be a proud feline fanatic. Classics in the sitcom world include the gleefully cat-crazed Angela Martin from *The Office*, the wizened Marjorie Armstrong-Perugian and her bulging kindle of kitties on *Mom*, and the relationship between Winston Bishop and his portly tabby Furguson in the Zoey Deschanel vessel *New Girl*.

Carrying the concept over to the animated realm, the off-kilter *Bob's Burgers* hosts Gayle Genarro, a lovably eccentric, artistic-leaning character, who's voiced by the actress Megan Mullally.

The ultimate animated cat lady

Alternatively known as Aunt Gayle, the character is introduced in season one as an animal lover with a quirky disposition. Granted the opportunity to display her artwork at the show's titular

hamburger emporium in the episode *Art Crawl*, Gayle proceeds to present a series of paintings depicting various animal butts.

As the show progresses, Gayle's cat credentials and collection of in-house felines ramps up. First up, we meet the puntastic Jean Paw'd Van Damme, a sleek tuxedo kitty who winds up living with Gayle in her studio apartment after she mistakenly pepper sprays him while under the assumption the four-legged friend is a devious intrud-

er. (After a trip to the vet, Jean Paw'd returns home sporting a pair of natty swimming goggles.)

By the time the show reaches its fourth season, a second feline enters Gayle's life. This time, it's a short-haired, orange cat named Pinkeye, who makes his screen debut in the Thanksgiving-themed episode *Turkey in a Can*. Key scenes include an entire turkey mysteriously ending up wedged in a toilet and restaurant owner Bob Belcher attempting to potty train Pinkeye.

Completing Gayle's clowder is Mr. Business (or Mr. Jim Business to bestow the feline with his full honorific). According to *Bob's Burgers* lore, Gayle scooped up Mr. Business from someone else's porch while on the way to the Belcher's aforementioned Thanksgiving

shindig. As Gayle herself relays, she discovered the portly gray-and-white Persian mix “just sitting there on someone’s porch in the sun.”

In the standout season seven episode *There’s No Business Like Mr. Business Business*, Gayle’s favorite kitty winds up signing with the Pets Pawsitive Pet Agency talent group for the opportunity to star as spokes-kitty for the Chef Cat cat food brand of products — although ultimately Mr. Business loses his agency manager to a rival feline named Jessica, who’s depicted as being a younger and more sprightly brand ambassador.

The top feline-themed episodes

Complimenting the antics of Gayle’s kitty crew, the character herself manages to channel the show’s lopsided sense of humor with a series of feline-themed



escapades and cat-centric quotes. At one point, Gayle embarks on a quest to find a soulmate by meeting someone from a dating website called Cat Chat. Spotlighting Gayle’s artistic ambitions, in the episode titled *The Kids Run Away*, she decides to bless the world with some of her cat-based poetry: “Little cat, you’re just like me/ You go outside and squat to pee/ Squat! Squat! Squat! Squat! Squat!”

In a fantastical moment, the episode *The Gayle Tales* features a *Game of Thrones*-inspired segment that involves

Gayle as the Queen of Catsteros on a quest to find her stolen cat dragons, riding on a half-dragon, half-cat mystical beast and jubilantly celebrating her triumph by declaring, “Eat, drink and be meowly!”

Most memorable of all, Gayle’s ultimate cat person moment arrives in the episode *Purple Rain-Union*, which originally aired a decade ago. While having something of a tiff with her sister, Linda Belcher, our hero successfully signs off by coining a true and relatable witticism for the ages: “My cat was right about you.” 🐾



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Pawticularly Meowable Episodes

Feel liking binging some *Bob’s Burgers* feline-fine Gayle episodes? Press play on these:

Season 1, Episode 8:
Art Crawl

Season 2, Episode 6:
Dr. Yap

Season 4, Episode 5:
Turkey in a Can

Season 4, Episode 6:
Purple Rain-Union

Season 4, Episode 19:
The Kids Run Away

Season 5, Episode 13:
The Gayle Tales

Season 6, Episode 4: Gayle Makin’ Bobsled

Season 6, Episode 6: The Cook, the Steve, the

Gayle, & Her Lover

Season 7, Episode 10:
There’s No Business Like Mr. Business Business

Season 7, Episode 22:
Into the Mild

Season 8, Episode 18:
As I Walk Through the Alley of the Shadow of Ramps

Season 9, Episode 11:
Lorenzo’s Oil? No, Linda’s

Season 10, Episode 15:
Yurty Rotten Scoundrels

Season 12, Episode 3:
The Pumpkinening



Mr. Business Dangle Earrings \$18.
ShopHelloDisco at
etsy.com



My Cat Was Right About You T-Shirt by Kirra Jade \$31.13. redbubble.com



Mr. Business Fan Club Mug \$9.26.
FarnumInkStudio at etsy.com